

The Bridging Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) has been established in recognition that recovery can only begin in a safe, healthy, and decent environment, a place one can call home. People with psychiatric disabilities are often unable to afford to rent housing of their choice in the community. BRAP is designed to assist individuals with housing assistance for up to 24 months or until they are awarded a Housing Choice Voucher (aka Section 8 Voucher), another federal subsidy, or alternative housing placement. All units subsidized by BRAP funding must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Quality Standards and Fair Market Rents. Following a *Housing First* model, initial BRAP recipients are encouraged, but not required to accept the provision of services to go hand in hand with the voucher.

Program participants pay 51% of their income for rent. BRAP subsidizes the remaining portion of the rent up to the Fair Market Rent.

Eligibility: There are three components to BRAP eligibility as detailed below.

I. DHHS requires that recipients of BRAP meet the following criteria:

1. Class Members of the AMHI Consent Decree; OR
2. Adults with Severe and Disabling Mental Illness who meet Eligibility For Care Criteria for Community Support Services as defined in Section 17.02 of the MaineCare Benefits Manual.

II. DHHS requires that all recipients of BRAP also meet the following conditions:

1. Adults who are receiving or are in the process of being (re-)instated for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)—in cases where applicants have no current SSI/SSDI or other income source, documentation of General Assistance must be in place or documentation of conditional approval must be present; and
2. Applicants must have previously applied for Federal Section 8 Rental Assistance through their local Public Housing Authority or other local Section 8 administering agency. If the wait list is closed, the applicant may be eligible for a waiver of this eligibility criterion provided that he/she agrees to and completes a Section 8 application at time of opening. Section 8 wait list status must be maintained to continue to receive BRAP assistance.

III. DHHS will provide funds, as available, on a ranked basis as indicated below:

1. Eligible people who are leaving State psychiatric institutions (AMHI, BMHI); and individuals in private psychiatric hospital beds; or those who have been discharged in the last six months from any of these institutions.
2. Eligible people who are homeless as defined by the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance act governing the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
3. Eligible people who are living in Substandard Housing in the community, as defined by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
4. Eligible people who are moving from community residential programs funded by DHHS, to more independent living arrangements.

There is currently a Waitlist for BRAP